

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
Euclid Avenue at East 22nd Street
Cleveland
Cuyahoga County
Ohio

HABS No. O-2129
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. 0-2129

TRINITY CATHEDRAL

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Location: Southeast corner Euclid Avenue and East 22nd Street, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio.

Present Owner: Trinity Cathedral, an Ohio Corporation (Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, Diocese of Ohio, Trinity Cathedral Parish)

Present Use: Sanctuary

Statement of Significance: Trinity was erected to serve as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Ohio. It is also the parish church for Trinity Parish, the first religious organization in Cleveland. Architecturally, the Cathedral is a significant example of English Gothic architecture.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Early negotiations for a Cathedral related to property on the estate of M.S.A. Carter - specifically the corner lot at Euclid Avenue and Perry Street (now E. 22nd Street). The property was offered to the vestry for \$50,000.00 in May, 1879 but they declined, later offering \$40,000.00, which was declined by Mr. Carter. In November 1883 the property was still available, but at an increased price of \$55,000.00 which was later downgraded to \$51,000.00, which was the finalized basis of purchase for the new Trinity Cathedral site on January 18, 1884.
2. Date of erection: Construction of the Cathedral began August 5, 1901. The cornerstone was laid on May 12, 1903, and the completed building was consecrated on September 24, 1907.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.: Trinity Cathedral was designed by Charles F. Schweinfurth, F.A.I.A., Architect. Schweinfurth was perhaps Cleveland's most prominent "turn of the century" architect. In addition to Trinity Cathedral, he designed several buildings at Case Western Reserve University, many residences on fashionable Euclid Avenue, and the Wade Park Avenue Bridge (HABS No. 0-2130). Schweinfurth was retained as the architect for the corporation of Trinity Parish from 1890 to 1907, and designed several subsidiary parish buildings in the cathedral complex.

The contractor for the foundation work of the cathedral was Andrew Dall and Son. Contractors for the superstructure were:

1. James W. Smith - masonry
 2. W.B. McAllister - carpentry
 3. Forest City Steel and Iron Co. - steel work
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Initially the development of the Trinity Cathedral site consisted of "chapel and parish buildings" to which was added a Church Home on "Prospect Street". This structure was built at a cost of \$35,000.00, and was completed in 1897. By July, 1894 construction was also underway on the initial parish buildings which included what was then termed the "Perry Street Chapel", the Chapter Room, the Dean's Study, a basement Gymnasium, various residential and other program areas on several levels. With the exception of the Church Home (designed in a modified Gothic mood), - the initial parish buildings were developed in the Romanesque style by Schweinfurth. During this same period, Schweinfurth was preparing plans for the main structure - the Cathedral proper, and the Chapel (now Cathedral Hall) served as the "Pro Cathedral". In order to facilitate the latter area for its temporary function the building was substantially extended toward Perry Street (E. 22nd), currently representing the space known as Cathedral Hall. The Plan of the Cathedral as built (accepted by the Vestry on January 9, 1895) was the result of a gradual evolving of the architect's original Neo-Romanesque plan into the Gothic idiom, then, through various refinements, eventually into the Neo-Perpendicular English Gothic of the building as built and as it stands today. Mr. William G. Mather, head of the building committee, said in an address at the Cathedral House to the subscribers "At first the Romanesque style was favored, but gradually the concensus of opinion changed to Gothic, until after careful consideration of plan after plan submitted by the architect, the one now being carried out in Early Perpendicular Gothic was adopted by the Committee on January 9, 1895.... With the change in opinion as to architectural style, came the conviction that as far as possible under the limitations of the size of the lot a structure should be built of truly cathedral appearance...." The original linen cloth drawings and working blueprints are stored in the vault of the cathedral, and reports of the building committee, which are kept in the cathedral archives also contain information on the design and construction of the building.

5. Alterations and additions: The structure has had no major alterations or additions since its consecration in 1907. Over the years stained glass windows, new lighting fixtures, and sculpture have been installed. These have all been done in keeping with the original design.

B. Bibliography

Archives of the Cathedral. Containing plans, specifications, preliminary designs, etc. Archives are kept at the Cathedral.

Campen, Richard N. Architecture of the Western Reserve, 1800-1900. Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1971.

Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, Historical and Architectural Guide. Cleveland: published by The Altar Society, Trinity Cathedral, 1939.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Cathedral itself is an excellent example of English Gothic architecture, with Perpendicular motifs predominating. The parish buildings behind the Cathedral are in the Romanesque idiom.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions:
 - a. Total inside length is 163'4"
 - b. Total inside width is 107'4" at ends of transepts
 - c. Extreme height of interior from floor to beginning of bell tower is 77'
 - d. Nave 67' x 38'
 - e. Crossing 40' x 40'
 - f. Sanctuary 57' x 38'
 - g. Transepts 33'8" x 38'
 - h. Narthex 10' x 60'
 - i. Nave aisles 11' wide
 - j. Chapel 22' x 45'
 - k. Tower. Extreme height from floor level to tops of octagonal corner pinnacles is 125'. Height to top of tower from floor level is 108'. Tower is 40' x 40'.
2. Foundation: Masonry piers extending to the "undercroft" have footings approximately 12' square.

3. Wall construction: Exterior walls are of solid masonry (Indiana limestone), smooth cut and laid in courses. Walls of the nave, transepts and chancel are supported by buttresses. The smooth walls of the Cathedral contrast with the rough faced random coursed walls of the parish buildings.
 4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: The narthex, or enclosed entrance porch, projects one bay beyond the nave facade. It incorporates three recessed, molded, and carved arched openings. The narthex is covered with three stages of vertical tracery, capped with a series of carved quatrefoils. There are also west and south entrances and one on the east through the cloister. The cathedral is heavily buttressed. The bays of the nave, transepts, and chancel are separated by buttresses. Octagonal corner buttresses, ending in elaborately capped pinnacles, are found at each corner of the tower, and at the ends of the transepts, chancel and nave.
 5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance is from Euclid Avenue through three recessed openings in the narthex. Doors also face Euclid Avenue in the transepts. All exterior doors are wood and are elaborately panelled.
 - b. Windows: Large traceried windows at chancel, transept and entrance ends. Clerestory windows are traceried. Aisle windows are without tracery in transepts and nave except for baptismal area and World War II chapel area. Chapel windows are all traceried. The groups of windows in the lower stage of the tower admit light to the crossing. The openings above the windows, in the upper stage, are filled with louvres and tracery. Tracery in all cases is of molded Indiana limestone.
 6. Roof: Gable roof. The covering of the roof is heavy copper, laid in cement with raised lock rib joints.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Flooring: Flooring in the cathedral is of dove-colored marble in two shades, laid in alternate diagonal squares and enclosed in darker colored marble borders. In the sanctuary, choir, and baptistry, the floors are finished in marble mosaic of Numidian and Verde Antique in rich designs, symbolic in character.
 2. Wall and ceiling finish: The interior facings of the walls are of russet-colored, vitrified brick with cut and moulded limestone pillars, arches and trimmings. The ceilings of the nave and transepts are plain early Gothic barrel vaulting in English oak, supported by heavily moulded principal ribs, springing from above each pillar and intersecting with

the moulded and carved ridge rib. The minor ribs divide the vaulting into panels. Over the choir and sanctuary the vaulting is heavily moulded, with carved bosses at the intersections. The side aisle roofs are divided into bays by moulded stone arches springing from each pillar to the exterior walls. The crossing is panelled with heavily moulded cross beams, intersecting with the cornice.

3. Trim: The spandrels of the arches of the nave and sanctuary are of stone heavily moulded, with panels formed by tracery mouldings. This detail in the sanctuary is more elaborate in design than in the nave, culminating at the chancel wall with a rich perpendicular reredos, eighteen feet high. Over the entrance to the chancel from each side aisle is a representation of an angel choir, with scroll, cut in full relief. The wall space over the arches in the crossing are faced with stone, cut and moulded into perpendicular paneling.
4. Lighting: Originally the interior of the Cathedral was lighted with clusters of raw light bulbs along the clerestory walls. These were replaced in 1938 with large lanterns designed by Travis G. Walsh, A.I.A., of Cleveland, and constructed by the Caldwell Company of New York.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The cathedral faces north on Euclid Avenue and is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Euclid Avenue and East 22nd Streets.
2. Outbuildings: The cathedral is the central element of a complex of subsidiary structures. Among these are:
 - A. Cathedral Parish House- (1895), several times remodeled with additions; 2 cornerstones: 1894 and 1902 on west end of Cathedral Hall.
 - B. Old Ladies' Homes- (1896), used since 1966 by Cleveland State University for classrooms. Mather Hall is its current name. Remodeled and altered from time to time.
 - C. Emily Hills' home given to Cathedral in 1890's used as "Deanery" in early days of Cathedral, then as Diocesan Headquarters, then as Sunday School and as rented property.
 - D. "Choristers' Hall", the barn of the above property, was remodeled and used as a choir hall c. 1902 to present.

- E. "Church House" Diocesan Headquarters. Remodeled extensively, was formerly Rorimer-Brooks Building. Purchased 1959. Remodeling completed 1961.

The Parish House and Old Ladies' Homes were also designed by Schweinfurth and are in the Romanesque style.

3. Landscaping and walks, enclosures: The cathedral is located on a relatively small lot, and landscaping at the front is minimal. To the rear is the Elizabeth Ring Mather Garden.

Prepared by Russell Allon Hehr
Librarian in Fine Arts
Cleveland Public Library
Cleveland, Ohio
1966

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as a cooperative project between the Western Reserve Historical Society and the Historic American Buildings Survey following a recommendation in 1964 by Mr. Robert C. Gaede, then the National Chairman of the American Institute of Architects' Committee for the Preservation of Historic Buildings. In February 1965, a final list of fourteen structures to be recorded was agreed upon by the Western Reserve Historical Society, Mr. Meredith B. Colket, Director; and the HABS, acting upon the recommendations of John C. Poppeliers, Editor. The Cleveland Chapter AIA assisted in the evaluation of these structures. A documentary research program which included both historical and architectural write-ups was coordinated by Mr. Jack Large, Assistant to the Director of the Western Reserve Historical Society. It was undertaken by members of the Society and local architects. Mr. Martin Linsey of Shaker Heights, Ohio, supplied the photographs.